

VZCZCXRO3019  
OO RUEHROV  
DE RUEHJM #0977/01 1581151  
ZNR UUUUU ZZH  
O 061151Z JUN 08  
FM AMCONSUL JERUSALEM  
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1750  
RHEHAAA/WHITE HOUSE WASHDC  
RHEHNSC/WHITE HOUSE NSC  
RUEKJCS/SECDEF WASHDC  
RUEKJCS/DIA WASHDC  
RUEAIIA/CIA WASHDC  
RUEADWD/DA WASHINGTON DC//DAS-ZD/DACS-ZK//  
RUEAHQA/CSAF WASHINGTON DC//POLAD//  
RHMFIUU/CMC WASHINGTON DC  
RUENAAA/CNO WASHINGTON DC//POLAD//  
INFO RUEHXX/ARAB ISRAELI COLLECTIVE  
RUEHTU/AMEMBASSY TUNIS 7150  
RUEHLO/AMEMBASSY LONDON 4137  
RUEHFR/AMEMBASSY PARIS 3990  
RUEHNC/AMEMBASSY NICOSIA 5488  
RUEHRO/AMEMBASSY ROME 3906  
RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK 2468

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 JERUSALEM 000977

SIPDIS

STATE PASS BBG  
STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD  
WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM  
NSC FOR ABRAMS  
CMC WASHINGTON DC FOR POLAD

JERUSALEM ALSO FOR ICD  
LONDON FOR HKANONA AND POL - TSOU  
PARIS ALSO FOR POL  
ROME FOR MFO

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAL](#) [KWBG](#) [KPAO](#) [IS](#)

SUBJECT: JERUSALEM MEDIA REACTION (6/06): UNITY TALKS CANNOT  
SUBSTITUTE FOR A POLITICAL PROGRAM

-----  
Main Stories:  
-----

All dailies carry extensive front page coverage and photos of the killing of a four-year old girl in an Israeli airstrike in Gaza Strip on June 5. The dailies report that another civilian was also killed during a military operation in Gaza Strip. All dailies carry "threats" made by Israeli Defense Minister Barak that, "a military operation in the Gaza Strip is closer now than at any other time in the past." The dailies also report that an Israeli was killed and five others injured after a rocket was launched from Gaza into Nar Oz settlement.

The dailies carry positive coverage of the "decision" made by Palestinian President Abbas to form a committee to, "follow up on implementation of his announcement on dialogue with Hamas." Dailies also report that Hamas leader Ismael Haniyah, "welcomed the idea." Al-Quds carries an AFP story stating that, "the United States does not oppose talks between Fatah and Hamas." Al-Quds also reveals the existence of an, "unwritten agreement between Abbas and Hamas leader Al-Zahhar, reached through Qatari mediation and Syrian support." The "agreement" is comprised of 18 points, including Hamas' acceptance of early Palestinian elections.

The front pages of the dailies report that Palestinian President Abbas and Secretary Rice discussed developments in the peace process and Israeli settlement expansion in a June 5 telephone call. According to the coverage, Abbas demanded that Rice work to end Israeli settlement activities, including natural growth and push for implementation of the Road Map. He confirmed Palestinian commitment to relevant international legal decisions, the Road Map plan, President Bush's vision for a Palestinian state and the Arab peace

initiative, according to WAFA News Agency. Al-Quds reports comments by Palestinian negotiator Sa'eb Erekat that allude to Barak Obama's AIPAC address, stating, "whoever considers Jerusalem to be the united capital of Israel closes the doors to peace."

-----  
BLOCK QUOTES:  
-----

1. Veteran columnist Mohammad Yaghi comments in independent Al-Ayyam under the headline, "Dialogue is primarily about the political agenda" (6/6): "President Abbas' invitation to start a national dialogue and end the state of division is very timely. There is a belief in Ramallah that Israel is not interested in a peace process that would end the occupation, and that the promises made by President Bush about a Palestinian state have never been truthful... this understanding was created by the acceleration of settlements in Jerusalem, despite the boring talks about peace post-Annapolis; by the immortalization of military barriers despite the talks about 'investment'; and by the continued invasions of Palestinian cities despite the efforts exerted by Palestinian security forces to implement the Roadmap... There are three issues that must be endorsed by (Fatah and Hamas) before [talking] about details: First, both should admit the futility of one side trying to [dominate] the other,... Secondly, national unity, despite its importance and necessity, is not an alternative to a political program outlining the goals of the Palestinian people, ... Thirdly, it is not acceptable to any Palestinian party for Israel to export its [internal political] crisis to the Palestinian house."

2. Under Al Quds' main editorial entitled, "Demolishing houses..."

JERUSALEM 00000977 002 OF 002

with the international community's stamp of approval," (6/6): "Hardly a day passes by without the Palestinian media reporting on Palestinian houses being demolished by the Israeli authorities in Jerusalem, its periphery and the West Bank, or of reports about [demolition] threats and warnings issued to hundreds, probably thousands of home-owners... This is accompanied by endless announcements for plans to build thousands of housing units in Jewish settlements on land occupied since the 1967 June war [despite] Security Council resolutions 242 and 338... This phenomenon [of Israeli violations] ... should not be allowed to pass unnoticed... remaining silent on this policy, is not acceptable. It is the duty of concerned Palestinians, Arab and European parties and all other friendly nations interested in easing Palestinian suffering to act decisively in bringing this issue before international organizations."

WALLES